

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 04553 071416Z

43

ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SMI-01 NSF-01 OES-03 L-02 IO-10

USIA-06 /036 W

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R 071310Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3779

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJECT: TUTANKHAMUN EXHIBIT

1. AMBASSADOR MET MAY 6 WITH DR. GAMAL MOKHTAR, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ANTIQUITIES, MINISTRY OF CULTURE, TO REVIEW PLANNING FOR TUTANKHAMUN EXHIBIT SCHEDULED TO BEGIN U.S. TOUR 1976. DCM, CAO AND COUNTRY DIRECTOR MATTHEWS WERE ALSO PRESENT. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF DISCUSSION.

2. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, MOKHTAR HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THOMAS HOVING, DIRECTOR, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, ABOUT A POSSIBLE CONTRACT ARRANGEMENT UNDER WHICH HOVING WOULD BECOME PROJECT MANAGER FOR ENTIRE U.S. TOUR OF TUTANKHAMUN EXHIBIT. MOKHTAR SOUGHT AMBASSADOR'S CONCURRENCE IN CONCLUDING SUCH A CONTRACT. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT, WHILE HE SAW NO OBJECTIONS TO HOVING UNDERTAKING THIS RESPONSIBILITY, HE HIMSELF WAS NOT IN POSITION TO RECOMMEND FOR OR AGAINST ANY PARTICULAR PERSON OR INSTITUTION ASSUMING THIS TASK. HE STRESSED THAT THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT, AS PARTY TO A CONTRACT WITH A PRIVATE INSTITUTION, SHOULD DETERMINE FOR ITSELF WHO COULD BEST REPRESENT ITS INTEREST IN MANAGING THE U.S. TOUR, ADDING HOWEVER, THAT CENTRAL PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES SHOULD DEFINITELY BE VESTED IN ONE ORGANIZATION TO INSURE PROPER COORDINATION OF THE TOUR. MOHKTAR SAID HE APPRECIATED AMBASSADOR'S POSITION AND WOULD TAKE UP THE MATTER IN HIS FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH BOARD RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAVELING EXHIBITS.

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 04553 071416Z

3. MOHKTAR AGAIN RAISED QUESTION OF WHICH CITIES AND HOW MANY SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN SCHEDULE. HE HAS NOW AGREED IN PRINCIPAL TO SIX CITIES FROM AMONG THE FOLLOWING SEVEN: WASHINGTON, NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO, NEW ORLEANS, AND HOUSTON. MOKHTAR HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER EXHIBIT SHOULD GO TO NEW ORLEANS OR HOUSTON; OTHER CITIES APPEAR FIRM IN HIS MIND NOW, BUT MIGHT WELL CHANGE WHEN ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS BEING AND MANAGEMENT CONTRACT IS SIGNED.

4. MOKHTAR IS MOST ANXIOUS TO INCLUDE PHILADELPHIA ON ITINERARY BECAUSE OF LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM AND DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES. HE HAS ALSO RECEIVED CORRESPONDENCE FROM DIRECTOR OF THE MUSEUM STRESSING THE BICENTENNIAL ANGLE FOR OPENING THE EXHIBIT IN THE CITY VICE WASHINGTON. DURING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DCM AND CAO LAST WEEK, MOKHTAR NOTED HE HAS BEEN ADVISED BY THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM THAT PRESIDENT FORD IS LIKELY TO OPEN THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IN PHILADELPHIA AND COULD POSSIBLY BE PERSUADED TO OPEN THE TUTANKHAMUN EXHIBIT ALSO. THAT IDEA APPEALS TO HIM IF THERE IS NO OBJECTION TO SCHEDULING WASHINGTON LATER IN THE ITINERARY. DCM OBSERVED THAT EMBASSY HAS NOT YET BEEN INFORMED OF ANY PLANS FOR PRESIDENT TO OPEN BICENTENNIAL IN PHILADELPHIA, BUT WOULD QUERY DEPARTMENT ON THAT MATTER AS WELL AS ON THE MATTER OF RESCHEDULING WASHINGTON.

5. MOKHTAR NOTED THAT, WHILE BOTH HOUSTON AND NEW ORLEANS HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE EXHIBIT, IT IS HIS IMPRESSION THAT NEW ORLEANS HAS BEEN MORE ENTHUSIASTIC IN PROPOSING PLANS FOR EXHIBIT AND HE IS THEREFORE INCLINED TO SELECT NEW ORLEANS OVER HOUSTON. THIS DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE A FIRM DECISION AND WOULD PRESUMABLY BE INFLUENCED BY PROJECT ORGANIZER.

6. MOKHTAR RAISED SUBJECT OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO BRING EXHIBIT TO USA. HE AGREED TO PROVIDE SAMPLES OF AGREEMENTS SIGNED IN THE PAST WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS. THESE WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT UPON RECEIPT. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY GUIDANCE AVAILABLE FROM DEPARTMENT ON THIS MATTER ALONG WITH SAMPLES OF AGREEMENTS USG HAS SIGNED FOR SIMILAR ARTISTIC EXCHANGES WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 04553 071416Z

7. ON MATTER OF SELECTING CONTRACTING INSTITUTION TO MANAGE EXHIBIT, MOKHTAR PROVIDED COPY OF LETTER HE HAS RECEIVED FROM HOVING INDICATING HOVING'S INTENTION TO VISIT CAIRO IN LATE MAY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FINAL DECISION REGARDING THE EXHIBIT MANAGEMENT COULD BE REACHED AT THAT TIME.

8. AS FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR TOUR GET UNDERWAY, AMBASSADOR BELIEVES IT WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL FOR CU'S PETER SOLMSEN TO VISIT

CAIRO TO ASSIST WITH FORMALITIES AND DISCUSS SPECIFICS  
WHICH EMBASSY NOT IN POSITION TO ADDRESS. PERHAPS VISIT  
COULD BE PLANNED TO COINCIDE WITH HOVING VISIT. PLEASE ADVISE  
IF THIS IS POSSIBILITY.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CULTURAL PROPERTY, CULTURAL EXHIBITS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 MAY 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** woolflhd  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** woolflhd  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 30 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <30 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <23 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** TUTANKHAMUN EXHIBIT  
**TAGS:** SCUL, EG  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006